

# Don't Step into Other People's Karma

In Indian culture, one is not supposed to step over anyone sitting or lying down. Is this just a custom, or is there a science behind it? Sadhguru answers.

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*In Indian culture, one is not supposed to step over anyone sitting or lying down. Is this just a custom, or is there a science behind it? Sadhguru answers.*

**Sadhguru:** This actually applies not only to human beings but to all creatures. In India, people would not even step over a sleeping dog.

When your experience of life is limited to physicality, you think the boundary of a human being is the skin. If you expand the way you experience life a little more, you will see the boundary of a human being goes beyond the skin – to what extent depends upon who he or she is. The more you close your

eyes and sit, the “fatter” you get – not in terms of fat as a substance – *you* get bigger. The less thinking you do, the [larger your presence](#) becomes.

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Most people experience some semblance of peace and balance within them *only* [when they are sleeping](#). Sleep is the most profound state that they know in their life. This is a most unfortunate way to live. When they are fast asleep, they are reasonably peaceful and balanced. When they are awake, they are all over the place.

So, when they lie down they are a little bigger. Especially if you are lying down on something hard, because there is no room for it to find expression on the side that you lie on, naturally it goes up to where there is space. Instead of your energies being all around you, it will be above you by about 50% to 100%.

## The extended energy body

Let us say hypothetically speaking, your energy body is one foot beyond your skin. If you lie down, it could be approximately one-and-a-half or two feet. Without you knowing, some amount of clearing up or expanding of the energy body naturally happens. At those times, people will keep more distance from you – not out of respect but simply because of the size of your energy body at that moment. This is the way it should be – as it is required for that moment. If you have a certain sensitivity, you will naturally know these things. You may say this is some special endowment – I do not entirely deny that. But at the same time, people do not have this kind of sensitivity largely because they cannot [pay attention](#) to anything. They cannot pay attention to anything because they are dismissive about life around them.

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When I was a five, six-year-old boy, I used to sit in the house, staring at something or sometimes at nothing. Much later, I realized in yoga, there is a mudra where you simply stare at nothing. Nothing is high, nothing is low. Something and nothing are the same to you – you are simply looking. Suddenly, my mother would pass by. Initially, I would see her, but the next time she would pass by, she would be all blurred and somewhat bigger. When she would pass by again, she would be almost transparent and even bigger.

Then my father would come. I would look at him with an empty stare. He would gesticulate in front of my eyes. Obviously, he was saying, “Why are you not studying?” or something like that. I did not hear the words, I just looked, and saw all kinds of things. Depending upon what kind of forms I saw, I knew what he was saying. He was worried that this boy was losing his mind, the way he was staring. If you paid enough attention, you would experience this yourself.

## What’s hanging around you?

In the [yogic physiology](#), there are three physical dimensions of your existence – the physical body, the mental body, and the energy body – *annamaya kosha*, *manomaya kosha*, *pranamaya kosha*. The physical body is made of physical material that we take from the planet in the [form of food](#). The mental body is also made of material from the world around you, but this material is much subtler. We build the [mental body](#) with information, reverberation, sounds, and impressions.

People who are conscious do not want to trip over or walk into someone else’s karma. By stepping over someone, you are kind of walking into their karma.

Since the physical body is made of physical substance, it takes a reasonably proper form. Most people’s mental body does not have a clear-cut form. They are not even conscious of what they have

gathered. For most human beings, not even 1% of the content is conscious. Because 99% is gathered unconsciously, the mental structure is scattered. It is quite a mess. If you can create a conscious structure to your mental form, and you are able to change the structure as per the requirement of the situation, your mind will be a magical instrument.

Your energy body too carries information. What form it takes depends upon what type of information is there within you. The information on the level of the physical body is called genetics. Likewise, there is information on the mental structure, and there is information on the energy structure.

People who are conscious do not want to trip over your mental body or your energy body. We do not know [what kind of karma](#) someone is carrying, but when they are sleeping or they are just about to fall asleep, the unconscious play of the karmic structure is at its highest. Because you do not perform any conscious activity, the unconscious activity is full-scale. People who are conscious do not want to trip over or walk into someone else's karma. By stepping over someone, you are kind of walking into their karma.

## Handling your “stuff”

It is wise not to pick up other people's stuff because handling your own stuff is challenging enough. This is why once you are on spiritual sadhana, as a [brahmachari](#), you do not hug anyone – doing “[Namaskaram](#)” is enough. We do not want to trip over your karma. Whether it is good or bad, we do not want to take it away from you. When your Guru has evolved a strategy for your specific karma, you should not mix it up with all kinds of people. Otherwise, it becomes unnecessarily complicated.

Do not step over anyone. You can go around them. It is also a mark of respect.

If you take in too much input from everywhere, the karmic process becomes very complicated. And the strategy evolved for your karma will not work if you keep mixing it up with someone else's all the time. Why some who are in serious sadhana withdraw into a solitary cave or the like is because they do not want to complicate things. They understood the complexity of their own karma and do not want to complicate it anymore.

That is why you do not step over anyone. You can go around them. It is also a mark of respect. And apart from that, it would disturb that person if you step over them. If you disturb their energy body, they may not immediately wake up, but internally, it disturbs them.

All this comes from a fundamental understanding about life. No matter what you were doing – you were running a business, you were married, bearing and raising children, fighting a battle – for anyone who was [born in this land](#), there was only one goal – ultimate liberation. *Mukti* was the only goal. The whole culture was structured around this. Many strategies were evolved so that you do not trip over someone else's karma. You do not want to acquire anything new because you know the complexity of what you already have. If you undo your own puzzle, it is good enough. You do not want to complicate it.

***Editor's Note:** Sadhguru looks at the past, present and future of this nation, and explores why this culture matters to every human being on the planet. With images, graphics and Sadhguru's inspiring words, here's Bharat as you have never known it!*

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